

## Opportunity Journalism: Frequently Asked Questions

### 1: The Core Philosophy & Need

#### **Q: What is "Opportunity Journalism" and why is it being launched now?**

**A:** Opportunity Journalism is a professional training framework developed by **fraycollege** and **Africa No Filter**. It is a direct response to a media landscape where African coverage is dominated by narratives of crisis, corruption, and collapse. The course equips practitioners with tools to center African agency, context, and forward momentum without ignoring urgent challenges.

#### **Q: What is "Deficit Framing" and what does it cost the continent?**

**A:** Deficit framing focuses exclusively on what is missing or failing in a community. Its costs are significant:

- **Audience Trust:** It leads to news avoidance and audience fatigue.
- **Economic Impact:** It negatively affects investment and global perceptions of stability.
- **Social Impact:** It strips communities of their dignity.
- **Journalistic Rigor:** It limits "newsworthiness" to Western-inherited editorial norms rather than the full complexity of African life.

#### **Q: Is this just "Positive News" or a government PR exercise?**

**A:** Absolutely not. Unlike "positive news," which can be superficial, Opportunity Journalism maintains full editorial rigor and investigative depth. It is a journalistic tool for better accountability that holds systems to a higher standard by showing what is possible when things work, making failure less likely to be seen as "inevitable".

#### **Q: Does Opportunity Journalism mean we stop reporting on corruption or crisis?**

**A:** Absolutely not. Rigorous accountability remains a pillar of journalism. However, Opportunity Journalism asks: *"What happens next?"* Instead of stopping at the collapse of a system, it investigates the people, innovations, and movements working to fix it. It ensures that the "victim" isn't the only character in the story.

### 2: Professional Practice & Application

#### **Q: How does this differ from Solutions Journalism?**

**A:** While it shares some DNA with solutions journalism, Opportunity Journalism is specifically rooted in the African context. It focuses on dismantling inherited deficit frames about the continent and interrogating who is positioned as an "expert" in our stories.

#### **Q: How will this help me in my daily newsroom work?**

**A:** The course provides practical narrative frameworks to help you identify stories of agency that others miss, pitch effectively to editors, and engage audiences suffering from "news fatigue".

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**Q: Does the course help with the practical "how-to" of writing?**

**A:** Yes. The course includes a **Language Guide** for identifying crisis-frame words, a **Narrative Audit Checklist** for your own work, and **Story Structure Templates** for news, features, and digital content.

**Q: Will this approach actually improve my audience engagement?**

**A:** Yes. Data shows that audiences—especially younger Africans—are turning away from traditional news because it feels hopeless. Opportunity Journalism provides a "hook" that empowers the audience, leading to higher retention, more social sharing, and a stronger relationship between the newsroom and the community.

**Q: I am a freelancer—is this relevant for me?**

**A:** Very. In a competitive global market, editors are looking for unique African perspectives beyond clichés. This framework provides a competitive edge for pitching nuanced, high-impact stories.

**3: Curriculum and Enrolment**

**Q: What will I learn in the four modules?**

**A:** The curriculum follows four progressive stages:

- **Module 1:** Diagnosing the cost of crisis framing and the reproduction of deficit narratives.
- **Module 2:** Practicing Africa-first framing and making ethical editorial choices regarding voice and expertise.
- **Module 3:** Practical skills for structuring stories, including headlines and avoiding "hype".
- **Module 4:** Measuring impact beyond clicks and advocating for these changes within your organization.

**Q: How is the course delivered?**

**A:** It is designed to be flexible for working professionals, delivered via the fraycollege LMS platform with a mix of video modules, practical exercises, and real-world case studies.

**Q: How much does the course cost? / Is fraycollege offering scholarships for newsrooms that can't afford the course?**

**A:** We are actively working with partners like Africa No Filter to ensure this knowledge is accessible. Our launch webinar is the first step in building a community of practice where resources and insights will be shared.

**4: Institutional Impact & Certification**

**Q: How can I convince my editor to let me use this approach?**

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**A:** Module 4 includes an **Internal Advocacy Guide** designed to help practitioners make the case to managers by focusing on how this approach rebuilds audience trust and relevance.

**Q: Is there a certification?**

**A:** Yes. Participants who complete the modules and the final assessment receive a professional certificate from fraycollege.

**Q: Can I take this course if I am not a journalist?**

**A:** Yes. While journalists are the primary audience, it is also designed for content creators and communication practitioners who believe how we frame stories has real consequences.

**Q: How does this course align with broader development goals?**

**A:** Narrative is an essential infrastructure for development. When people see themselves as agents of change rather than victims of circumstance, they are more likely to participate in health interventions, economic opportunities, and civic life. Opportunity Journalism is the communication engine for that shift.

## **5. Other Objections**

**Q: Is this just a polite way of asking us to go easy on the government?**

**A:** Actually, it's the opposite. Opportunity Journalism holds systems to a higher standard. By reporting on where solutions are working, we remove the excuse that failure is "inevitable." We aren't going easy on the government; we are showing exactly what is possible, which makes incompetence or corruption even more visible by contrast.

**Q: In a resource-strapped newsroom, why should I spend time on 'Opportunity' stories when 'Crisis' stories get immediate clicks?**

**A:** Short-term clicks are leading to long-term "news avoidance." Data shows audiences are switching off because they feel powerless. Opportunity Journalism isn't just "nice to have"—it's a business survival strategy. It builds a deeper, more loyal relationship with an audience that wants to engage with the world, not just hide from it.

**Q: How does Opportunity Journalism handle breaking news or disasters?**

**A:** Framing starts at the breaking news stage. Instead of just "50 people dead in a flood," an Opportunity frame includes: "Community-led rescue efforts save dozens as flood hits." It's about including the agency of the people on the ground from the very first report, rather than waiting for a "one-year-later" feature.

**Q: Is this framework applicable to beats like Finance or Sports?**

**A:** Absolutely. In Finance, it moves the story from "Market Crash" to "How African Fintech is pivoting to protect small businesses." In Sports, it moves beyond the score to the systems of talent development. It is a lens for every beat, not a separate category of news.

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**Q: What if the 'Opportunity' fails?**

**A:** Failure is part of the story. If a promising innovation fails, we investigate why. That is still Opportunity Journalism because it provides the "context" and "learning" necessary for the next attempt. We report on the process of progress, which isn't always a straight line.

**Q: Will this training actually change newsroom culture, or will reporters just go back to their old habits tomorrow?**

**A:** That's why Module 4 exists. We don't just teach storytelling; we provide resources like an 'Internal Advocacy Guide' and an 'Institutional Integration Checklist'. We help practitioners change the "software" of the newsroom—the editorial meetings, the pitch forms, and the success metrics—not just the individual story.

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